

S E C R E T

21 October 1965

BRIEFING NOTES
FOR THE DCI

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

(MAP, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AND SANTO DOMINGO)

- I. The Dominican Republic may be back on the verge of a crisis again, after more than four months of civil war and six weeks of a shaky truce under a provisional government.
 - A. Last Saturday a mob which had been attending a left-wing rally in Santo Domingo attacked and murdered a prominent right-wing political leader, Angel Severo Cabral. (This is not former President Donald Reid Cabral.)
 1. The mob caught Cabral when he returned to his home in the rebel zone to pick up some personal belongings. Armed leftists broke into his house and wounded the right-wing leader, his wife, and daughter. Then they chased him through the yard to a neighboring house and killed him.
 - B. The incident has inflamed the conservatives, who have been complaining that the provisional president, Hector Garcia Godoy, has done nothing to make the Communists live up to their obligations under the settlement proposed at the end of August by the OAS.

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- C. There has been sporadic shooting in Santo Domingo off and on since October 19th, along with signs of an approaching showdown.
1. As of yesterday, the former rebel zone was back under effective rebel control. Rebel combatants were reported moving back into the zone and restoring their barricades.
 2. Right-wing vigilante groups are in a state of alert, to protect themselves and to retaliate if expected leftist attacks materialize.
 3. The military leaders, angered by the repeated postponement of any moves to establish effective government authority over the rebel zone, have threatened to take action on their own. They say they will clean out the zone themselves, and possibly even depose Provisional President Garcia Godoy, if the collection of rebel weapons does not begin.
 4. Ambassador Bunker believes, however, that he has persuaded the military leaders to give Garcia Godoy until Friday to meet their demands.
- II. Garcia Godoy has been reluctant, ever since he was sworn in on September 3rd, to call on either the Dominican military or the Inter-American Peace Force for help in making the rebels live up to the terms of the settlement. As a result he has had no leverage in his dealings with the rebels.

A. The leftists, confident that they had in fact won the civil war, largely ignored Garcia Godoy. They went so far as to install officials of their own choosing by force, to replace incumbents considered by the rebels to be right-wingers.

1. For instance, a leftist group last month seized control of the University of Santo Domingo, driving out the legitimate administration. Right-wing vigilante groups finally put the ousted university officials back on the campus after appeals to the provisional government had produced no action.
2. Most of the weapons the rebels were supposed to surrender have either been hidden in the rebel zone or smuggled into the interior for possible use in guerrilla warfare.

B. On October 13 and 14 rebel military elements, estimated at about 1,400 men, moved out of the rebel zone and into a military camp where they were to await re-integration into the regular military. They have insisted on retaining their weapons, and on freedom of movement. These are some of the men who now are apparently again occupying their former strongholds.

III. Relations between Garcia Godoy and the military have gone downhill virtually from the outset.

- A. The military leaders agreed that their controversial leader, General Wessin y Wessin, would have to leave the country, but they resent the timing and the methods used to force him out.
 - B. The military, the moderates, and the conservatives have all become increasingly suspicious of Garcia Godoy because of his regime's conciliatory policies toward the rebels--including the appointment of some leftists to high positions in the government.
 - C. Vacillation over the disbanding of the rebel forces and collection of weapons was the last straw, and the murder of Severo Cabral was the clincher that galvanized the conservative and right-wing opposition.
 - D. Joaquin Balaguer, leader of one of the two major parties in the country, and a possible presidential winner if elections are finally held, is withdrawing his support from the provisional regime.
- IV. The other major party is led by former president Juan Bosch, whose return from Puerto Rico on September 25th has done little to ease tension.
- A. Bosch has made no effort to cooperate with the provisional regime. He has devoted himself instead to a bitter campaign against the United States.

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- V. The Inter-American Peace Force still has about 10,655 men in the Dominican Republic. When the rebel combatants first moved out of the rebel zone in mid-October, the IAPF began taking down its own barricades, and was to be concentrated in an encampment west of the city, near the Hotel Embajador.
- A. The force includes 8,876 US personnel, 1,136 Brazilians, companies from Nicaragua, Honduras, and Paraguay, and a token unit of 21 men from Costa Rica.
- B. The terms of the settlement in August provided that the provisional government would negotiate the continuing role of the IAPF--as well as the manner and timing of its withdrawal--with the Organization of American States.
- C. Political leaders, however, have been cashing in on the resentment of foreign troops to make a political football out of the IAPF. Even some who admit in private that the Inter-American Force must stay, feel that they have to call for its withdrawal in their public statements in